Government of India adopted an open sky policy for a limited period allowing operations of extra section flights by airlines of various countries with effect from 1st December, 2002, subject to a commercial agreement with Air India. This policy will be in place till 30th April, 2003. This has enabled foreign carriers to mount extra flights to meet the demand during peak tourist season.

Airmiss Near Nagpur

4039. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the airmiss which occurred on 17th February over Nagpur, between Chennai-bound Indian Airlines aircraft and Taiwan's Eva Airways flight was due to malfunctioning of Radar after it got struck by lightning a few days earlier; and

(b) if so, the reasons for not taking timely action to make the Radar function properly especially when no back-up facility was available to monitor the separation between aircrafts flying over Nagpur and the officials responsible for this serious lapse?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The airmiss involving Indian Airlines and Eva Airways aircraft occurred over Nagpur on 17-02-2003. The non-availability of radar was a contributory factor. The radar equipment at Nagpur suffered extensive damage when lightning struck on 16-02-2003 and the equipment was rendered unserviceable with effect from 1800 hours IST. Arranging the spares and diagnosing faults took some time and the radar facility was finally restored at 2000 hours IST on 17-02-2003.

Commercial use of Safdarjung Airport

4040. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal with Government to dismantle the existing Safdarjung Airport and commercialise the vacant land to generate additional revenue;

(b) if so, the details of the commercial/other activities which are planned to be carried out on the land; and

(c) whether Delhi's new Master Plan permit the use of land for commercial activities?